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MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the

URBAN DISTRICT (Municipal Borough) OF ROMSEY

The Romsey Press Limited

ANNUAL REPORT

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Medical Officer of Health

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URBAN DISTRICT (Municipal Borough) OF ROMSEY

YEAR 1950

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Romsey.

In accordance with my statutory duty I submit for your information and consideration my Report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Borough of Romsey for the year 1950.

The Report is divided into 5 sections.

A.—Statistics and social conditions of the area.
B.—General provision of Health Services.
C.—Sanitary circumstances in the area.
D.—Housing.
E.—Administration.
F.—Inspection of and supervision of food and its production.
G.—Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

Staff:

Medical Officer of Health	C. TATE, L.R.C.P., D.P.H. *Retired 30th April, 1950.*
	A. C. MACKENZIE, M.D., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	JOHN DAVIES, M.I.MUN.E., F.R.I.C.S., M.R.S.I.
Sanitary Inspector	R. D. MORRIS, M.R.S.I.
Rodent Officer	V. HOW
Secretary	Miss D. RUSSELL

A. Statistics and social conditions of the area.

Area (in acres)	1212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar General) ...	6580
Rateable Value	£42,385
Sum represent.d by a 1d. rate	£168
Number of Council Houses built before September, 1939..	182
,, ,, ,, ,, ,, after January, 1945 ..	164
The Council also owns 11 Flats and 4 Cottages	
Total number of occupied houses	1896

As the Borough houses a Brewery, Paper Mills and a Jam Factory, as well as the usual sources of employment of a Country Town, unemployment is not a problem at present.

Summary of Vital Statistics for the year 1950.
As supplied by the Registrar General.

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births—			
Total Registered	52	42	94
Legitimate	50	41	91
Illegitimate	2	1	3
Still Births—			
Total	3	1	4
Legitimate	3	1	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Deaths—			
Total Registered	40	50	90
Maternal Mortality			
Death from Puerperal causes—			
Puerperal Pyrexia		0	0
Other Puerperal causes		1	1
Total...		1	1
Infant Mortality			
Death of Infants under 1 year of age—			
Total Registered	2	1	3
Legitimate	2	1	3
Illegitimate	0	0	0

Comparative Statistics (where available)—

	Romsey	England & Wales
Birth rate per 1,000 estimated resident population	15.5	16.2
Still birth, rate per 1,000 population ...	.6	.4
Still birth, rate per 1,000 live and still births ...	40.6	23

Maternal Mortality—rate per 1,000		
Total (live and still births—		
Puerperal Sepsis	Nil	54
Other causes	10	
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age—		
All infants per 1,000 live births ...	31.9	29.8
Death rates per 1,000 estimated average population—		
Total	13.7	11.6
Tuberculosis Pulmonary	.15	.36
Non-Pulmonary	.15	
Cancer	1.96	—
Measles	Nil	—
Diphtheria	Nil	0.00
Enteritis under 2 years, per 1,000 live births ...	Nil	1.9

B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. *Public Health affairs of the Authority.*

The Medical Officer of Health is also Medical Officer of Health to Romsey and Stockbridge Rural District Council and an Assistant County Medical Officer of the Hampshire County Council. This arrangement helps in the co-ordination of the services supplied by the County Council and those supplied by this Council.

The Chief Sanitary Inspector and Assistant Sanitary Inspector are also the Engineer and Surveyor and the Assistant Engineer and Surveyor of the Council.

Food inspection is carried out with the co-operation of a Veterinary Surgeon.

2. *Nursing in the Home.*

There is no nursing arrangement or contribution made by the Council but two members represent the Council on the District Health Sub-Committee of the County Council.

3. *Laboratory Facilities.*

These are available at the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Royal Hants County Hospital, Winchester, the M.R.C. Laboratory, Southampton and the Pathology Department, Salisbury General Infirmary.

4. *Ambulance Service.*

This service is supplied by the County Council.

5. *Hospital Service.* (Regional Hospital Board).

General, Maternity and Infectious Diseases (including Tuberculosis and Smallpox) Hospital accommodation is available in Romsey, Salisbury, Southampton and Winchester.

6. *Welfare.*

Ante Natal and Child Welfare Clinics are held in Romsey and a Home Help service is available. These services are also supplied by the County Council.

F. Prevalence and control over Infectious and other diseases.

The incidence of Infectious Disease was very low. There were 2 cases of Puerperal Pyrexia, 1 Scarlet Fever and 1 Erysipelas notified.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

At the end of 1950 the number of children immunised at any time was:—Born ;—1950 25 ; 1949 74 ; 1948 128 ; 1947 100 ; 1946 78 ; Between 1941-1945 (incl.) 313 ; Between 1936-1940 (incl.) 430. Total 1148. In addition Booster doses were given.

Estimated Population—Mid 1950.

Under 5 years, 606. Percentage immunised	...	66.8
5 - 14 years, 999. Percentage immunised...	...	74.4

This percentage gives reasonable chance of warding off any threat of an epidemic spread of the disease but should not be allowed to become lower because no case of Diphtheria has occured during the last few years. Cases occur elsewhere in the country and there is still a risk of the disease spreading.

SECTION C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Report of the Borough Engineer, Surveyor and Chief Sanitary Inspector.

1. *Water.*

The area is supplied with a piped supply by the Southampton Corporation from their Waterworks Pumping Station at Timsbury. The quality of the water is good and the supply " constant ". A few houses in isolated areas still obtain their supply from shallow wells which are liable to contamination, and inadequate. The numbers of these houses have been reduced as opportunity offers.

2. *Drainage and Sewerage.*

During the year under review 96,623,225 gallons of sewage were pumped to the Sewage Works at Greenhill to receive treatment. The increase, despite the reduced rainfall and dry summer with its consequent saving on infiltration is attributed to the completion and occupancy of the new post-war houses within the year, in the Town, the provision of baths and sanitary accommodation being contributory.

The quantity dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 264,700 gallons, which is the discharge expected from a population of 8,825 persons at an allowance of 30 gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 58,014,225 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 317,017 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 10,566 persons. During the six summer months 38,609,000 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 210,977 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 9,032 persons, allowing in both instances 30 gallons per head per day.

The amount of rainfall during the year registered at the Disposal Works was 35.50, 15.43 of which fell in the winter months and 18.07 in the summer months.

The need for the complete overhaul and extension of the Sewage Works is more than ever required. Considerable improvements have been affected as far as possible by management and minor alterations. The scheme and plans now in the course of preparation for this improvement is eagerly awaited, and will be a considerable relief to the resources and to the officials when the work is put in hand.

Whitenap Sewerage.

Plans and sections and most of the detail work for the extension of the sewers to the Whitenap area have been completed and reported on and now await clearance by the County Council and the Ministry of Local Government and Planning, before the work can be proceeded with in the preliminaries for securing tenders and ultimately to be put in hand.

Rivers and Streams.

In the area they are reasonably free from pollution and there are no cases to report.

Closet Accommodation.

The District except in a few isolated cases is on water carriage system.

Public Cleansing.

The service is covered by District Labour over the whole of the district and mechanical transport is used. All premises are visited once per week, and in certain cases where the waste is heavy and highly putrescent, collections are made more frequently during the week. The arrangements are satisfactory and the work well organised. All the highways receive weekly cleansing, the main roads being cleansed by arrangements with the County Council, who contribute towards the cost, 85 loads of street sweepings with an estimated weight of 200 tons were collected during the year. The refuse collected is taken to the Controlled Tip at Timsbury, 46 tons per week, and after sorting it is tipped into excavated disused gravel pits. Constant precautions are taken against vermin and rat infestation.

Sanitary Inspection in the Area.

Inspection of the District has been carried out as often as possible. General sanitary circumstances of the shops and compliance with the Shop Act, 1934 are complied with, and no action has been necessary with any shop during the course of the year. The total number of Sanitary Inspections amounted to 385 and 146 nuisances were discovered and subsequently abated. During the year 4 fumigations were carried out after cases of infectious disease.

Camping Sites.

No sites were used for camping purposes during the year. One licence under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936 was issued by the Local Authority during the year. Estimated number of campers resident in the area at any one time—none.

Smoke Abatement.

No complaints were received during the year. The Borough has few factories.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

Bathing for members of the male sex has for a great number of years by use and custom taken place in a portion of the Fishlake Stream, towards the upper reaches. The river is continually flowing—the source of supply being the River Test.

The Corporation possess a modern open-air Swimming Pool, equipped with modern purification plant. This plant has been brought up to a state of perfection after the War years. The Pool is well managed and patronised Samples of Pool water are taken at frequent intervals for bacteriological and chemical examinations. Records are kept and no adverse reports have been received.

During the year the number of persons using the Pool were as follows :—

Bathers—	
Schoolchildren ...	3,920
Season Ticket Holders	5,110
Spectators ...	856
Others (Paid Admission)	7,561
Total	17,447

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

Number of Council Houses found to be infested	0
Other Houses do.	2
Number of fumigations carried out during the year	7

Schools.

Inspection was made from time to time on the sanitary circumstances and conditions in the Schools within the Borough. The Buildings for the most part are old, out-dated and overcrowded. The Sanitary Accommodation and drainage is connected with the Council Sewers and is on the water carriage system.

SECTION D. Housing

1. *New Buildings and Housing.*

49 building plans were submitted for approval during the year, as follows:

2 for the erection of new houses.
17 for the improvement of existing houses.
20 for the improvement of business premises.
10 for the erection of garages.

49

The standard of fitness for more than 50% of the property suitable for housing in the Borough is well below the standard recommended by the Ministry of Health, and more than 20% are in such a state of dilapidation as to be incapable of repair at reasonable expense. In addition more than 400 applications for Council Houses have been received from families living in overcrowded conditions and a continuous new housing programme is therefore justified.

The use of our own workmen for repairs and maintenance of the Council's properties proves to be very expeditious and efficient. Not only are repairs promptly done and to our satisfaction, but time is saved against delays experienced when waiting for a contractor to make men and materials available, according to the degree of urgency. A complimentary reduction in the amount of office work and time required in the preparation of specifications and measuring and accounting for work done against contractors accounts is also a notable feature, contributing towards saving in costs, and the efficiency of the Department.

The question of future housing sites has been persued and proposals made for developing land already in the ownership of the Council, (Priestlands and Botley Road) and in the case of Priestlands a local enquiry had been held with the Ministry of Local Government and Planning and preliminary notices served and negotiations commenced. At Botley Road a survey has been made, proposals put forward and every effort is being made to get this site worked upon, with as little delay as possible, in order that house construction can be put in hand. During the past twelve months no Council Houses have been constructed. It is anticipated that at least 30 dwellings will be commenced and completed during the course of the year 1951/2. There is still an urgent need for further sites, and this is kept in mind at all times.

SECTION E. Administration.

A considerable volume of technical work is undertaken by the Department and the number of delegated duties continue to increase. Whilst the staff is not adequate to cope with all the detailed demands made on it, the assistance given clerically and technically is of a high standard and gives one confidence in undertaking these tasks. It is still found necessary to spend a considerable amount of overtime, outside of office hours, to keep the work anything like up-to-date. The office facilities are still very poor, quarters cramped and badly lit, and much below the standard. If improved it would benefit the health and well-being of the occupants and increase the quality and the quantity of output and secure proper storage for plans and records, worthy of the time spent on them.

SECTION F. Inspection of Foods and Production.

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report, 1950.

1. *Milk Supply.*

Milk collected in the Borough is passed in bulk to another authority for pasteurisation.

Premises of cowkeepers are under the control of the County executive, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

2. *Meat and other Food Stuffs.*

During the year the number of pigs slaughtered in the Borough was five and these were passed for human consumption.

A considerable amount of beef was condemned, due to bone taint, a condition caused through faulty slaughtering. Representations have been made to the appropriate authorities with regard to this matter. A quantity of minced beef, supplied for the Schools Meal Service was condemned, due to its unfitness for human consumption. Conditions in food shops were in most cases satisfactory However, the question of the cleanliness of the vehicles delivering meat in the Borough is far from ideal, and adverse reports have been made to the authority concerned, with no definite sign of improvement as yet.

G. Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New cases notified during 1950.

Pulmonary—		Non-Pulmonary—	
Male ...	3	Male ...	2
Female ...	1	Female ...	0
Total ...	4	Total ...	2

Deaths.

Pulmonary—		Non-Pulmonary—	
Male ...	1	Male ...	1
Female ..	0	Female ...	0
Total ...	1	Total ...	1

Causes of Death in Romsey Urban District, 1950.

Causes of Death	*Males*	*Females*
ALL CAUSES	40	50
Tuberculosis	2	0
Cancer	9	4
Intra Cranial Vascular lesions	3	6
Heart Diseases	12	23
Other Circulatory Diseases	0	1
Bronchitis	1	4
Pneumonia	2	1
Other Respiratory Disease	0	0
Ulcers Stomach	2	0
Diarrhœa, under 2	0	0
Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	1
Congenital injuries, etc.	0	1
Suicide	0	0
Road Traffic	0	0
Other Violent	1	0
All Others	8	9

Yours faithfully,

A. C. MACKENZIE,

Medical Officer of Health.